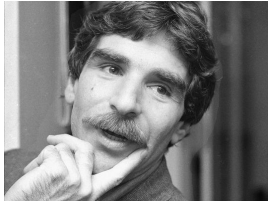


Harry Reems, star of porn's 'Deep Throat,' dies

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The porn actor died Tuesday in Salt Lake City.



(Photo: 1979 AP photo)

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Harry Reems, the male star of the 1972 cultural phenomenon *Deep Throat*, which brought pornography to mainstream audiences, has died at age 65.

Reems died Tuesday afternoon at the veterans' hospital in Salt Lake City, his wife, Jeanne Sterrett Reems said Wednesday. Doctors haven't determined his cause of death but Reems had multiple health issues, including pancreatic cancer, his wife said.

Reems became famous for his role in the adult-film classic *Deep Throat*, which drew middle class audiences to the theater and became a forerunner of today's hardcore adult-entertainment industry.

The film later served as the nickname for a source that helped *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein investigate the Watergate scandal that led to President Richard Nixon's resignation.

Reems was born in New York in 1947 as Herbert Streicher. He served in the U.S. Marines before he ended up in the entertainment industry in the 1970s. He aspired to become a serious actor but was thrown in front of the camera while working on the production crew for *Deep Throat*.

At the 2005 premiere of a documentary about *Deep Throat* at the Sundance Film Festival, Reems told the Associated Press that the film was the first to "drop any pretense that it had educational value."

"There was no socially redeeming value, and so the word of mouth went out from people who saw it saying 'This is just a comedy. It's great. You've got to see this,'" Reems said.

When the original male lead didn't work out, Reems, the lighting director, stepped in. He played a doctor helping a patient, played by Linda Lovelace, with a sexually sensitive area at the back of her throat. Lovelace died in 2002.

The movie, an unlikely box-office sensation, became a touchstone for obscenity laws and a target for anti-smut activists.

In 1976, Reems was convicted of obscenity for his role in the film and faced a potential five-year prison term. Celebrities including Jack Nicholson and Warren Beatty came to Reems' defense, and the conviction was overturned.

After *Deep Throat*, he went on to star in dozens of adult films, including *The Devil in Miss Jones*.

"He hated, at the end, doing porn," Jeanne Reems said. "It was all he could make money doing."



In the 1980s, he left the porn industry and moved to Park City, Utah, where he eventually became a real-estate agent.

In 1989, a judge placed Reems on five years' probation and ordered him to pay back taxes after pleading guilty to failing to pay income tax on \$35,000 in movie earnings. The court also ordered Reems to undergo an alcohol detoxification program and undergo psychological counseling.

In a 2006 interview with the *Deseret News*, Reems described his battles with alcohol and how his life transformed after he became sober.

"I literally should be dead. I know a lot of people who drank a lot less than me, and they are dead," Reems said. "God has left me on this Earth for a reason, and I think it's to save lives."

Reems said the public life he had led was his "downfall."

He married Jeanne in 1990, the first and only marriage for both.

"He was very romantic and a great husband," she said.

Family friend Don Schenk, who knew Reems for 20 years, described him as a "nice guy," a great salesman and an avid golfer and skier.

"I met him long after he left the adult film industry. The adult film industry basically destroyed him," Schenk said. "He would never talk about the salacious stuff — we always talked about how he was a survivor."

Reems struggled with multiple health problems in his final years and was hospitalized on March 5. His health problems kept him at home in recent years and he went through chemotherapy earlier this year for early stage pancreatic cancer.

"His last year or so was really, really hard," Jeanne Reems said.

Besides his wife, Reems is survived a brother. He had no children.

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